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FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 1909.

**ISSUES FOR THE CANDIDATES.**

Have the preliminary statements of the two gubernatorial candidates buried prohibition as an issue between them in the campaign? Some of our State contemporaries say it has, some say it has not, a few seem to vacillate from one view to another. At least one of them is attributing to this paper the view that Judge Mann's declarations eliminated the State-wide issue entirely, though it is certain that we have said nothing which justifies any such statement. There is, as we have pointed out to the contrary, an appreciable difference in the position of the two men, Judge Mann's position obviously offering the greater opportunities to the advocates of State prohibition. He gives them two methods of attaining their end, where Mr. Tucker gives but one. Other things being equal or regarded as of secondary importance, all prohibitionists will naturally vote for Judge Mann.

To this extent, State-wide prohibition is an undeniable issue in the campaign. How far it will be pushed forward depends largely upon the will of the candidates themselves and of their friends and supporters. But in any case it is not the only issue, is not even the most important issue, and should not be agitated to the exclusion of other things. The candidates' views and intentions regarding the liquor matter have now been clearly defined, as was right and proper, and the voter may study and weigh them at his leisure. But the progress and prosperity of Virginia during the next gubernatorial term are by no means bound up with the saloon issue, one way or the other. There are other problems of pressing importance, calling not merely for gubernatorial acquiescence or negation, but for constructive statesmanship of no mean order, and loudly summoning the candidates to a definition of their ideas and policies.

For one thing there is this whole broad movement toward a new era in agriculture, now just stirring in this State. Rarely blest as Virginia is in gifts of soil and climate, a natural farming section not surpassed on the continent, she has been, and is, heavily handicapped by ignorant methods and want of technical skill, and so sees herself easily surpassed by more enterprising States with far less advantages. Educational influences supported by the State and loyally backed up by the press are doing what they can to spread the great gospel of the new agriculture, but the process is necessarily slow. How can it be hastened and extended? What contributions have the candidates to make to this compelling problem? Applicants for the highest office in an agricultural State suffering from backwardness, what matured plans have they for stimulating the farm development of Virginia?

Then there is the oyster question. Unwise legislation has at the same time deprived the State of much needed revenue and gone far toward destroying the great wealth which her oyster beds should mean to her. As a result of so short-sighted a policy, Virginia, despite wonderful natural advantages for this industry, is being distanced by States with no natural advantages at all. A serious problem is thus raised, but the cry that the issue is between poor men and rich men has proved enough to frighten and silence timid politicians. How would a statesman meet this issue? What would Judge Mann or Mr. Tucker, as Governor of Virginia, do to help Virginia's waning oyster industry?

Again there is the question of taxation, a question which strikes through to every hearthside in Virginia. Through a bad, weak and patchwork tax law, and lax enforcement of it, the State loses hundreds of thousands of dollars of due revenue annually, while dishonesty in making returns with its easy premium. How inequitable is our method of assessment has been shown in recent articles in this paper, and later articles will shed light upon various other highly objectionable phases of our taxation system. Lost revenue, unfair assessments, unjust listing, increasing tax-dodging—these are matters urgently demanding reform. How would the candidates supply this very vital demand? What methods have Judge Mann and Mr. Tucker to suggest for putting taxation in Virginia on a just, wholesome and effective basis?

How a candidate would handle a prohibition bill happens to be interesting to Virginians just now, but it is a purely isolated issue. This or that answer from him may happen to please the majority of the voters, but it discloses nothing whatever about his qualities for capable and constructive administration. To elect a candidate on his prohibition professions alone would certainly be in Virginia's case at least, the acme of shortsighted folly. The State is facing problems of far more permanent moment, and

she sorely needs a man on Capitol Hill who can bring the greatest wisdom, ability, force and courage to the solving of them.

**STILL PRAISING VIRGINIA.**

Now that attention is being directed to the extraordinary advantages of Virginia as compared with many sections of the country that are more vigorously advertised and more scientifically cultivated, The Times-Dispatch is in almost daily receipt of letters from Virginians, who have either traveled or who live abroad, bearing conclusive testimony to the superior resources of this State. One of the most instructive letters we have ever printed was that from Frank Brown, which vigorously portrayed the hardships and disappointments that await the average settler in the West. By comparison, Mr. Brown showed the infinitely greater opportunity for health, wealth and happiness offered by Virginia and convincingly testified to the truth of the old fable about the sons who found a fortune in the field by breaking every clod in the search for gold.

To-day we print another letter to the same import from a correspondent in Staunton exemplifying the truth of the proverb, "Every one takes the unknown for something great," and showing how much more is to be secured from the known opportunities at home than from the unknown vast "hospitable deserts of the West stretching away over to the horizon." To the end of time there will always be those who prefer to spend their lives in seeking for the pot of gold at the rainbow's end to picking up the wealth that lies right to their hands. But the great increase in farm land values of Virginia, the inspiration of better agricultural knowledge, the rising price for all farm products, the betterment of roads, and the vast improvement of country schools have all combined to make Virginia one of the most enviable localities for country residences in the world. Those who wish to raise cattle have the Valley and the South-west; those who wish to raise truck have the Tidewater districts; tobacco, corn and peanuts all offer great opportunities and practically certain returns; small manufactures are springing up throughout the entire State; the apples and fruit of Virginia are being advertised and sold as never before in its history; and the whole State is athrob with such vigor and life as have not been felt in it for half a century.

Doubtless some adventurous spirits will continue to leave, but many more will come, and those who come and those who stay alike face fairer prospects than any settlers or inhabitants who have heretofore filled the hospitable soil of Old Virginia.

**CLEVELAND'S GOLDEN RULE POLICE.**

Through the very liberal methods used on her penitential farm and the "Golden Rule" system employed in her police department, the city of Cleveland has made something of a name for herself for advanced and enlightened treatment of criminals. Now comes the charge that the Golden Rule policy has proved a failure there. The theory of this policy was to arrest as few offenders as possible and to advise, warn and start on a better path as many as possible. Drunks were escorted, not to cells, but home to bed. The plan was understood to be working well, but now it is said that under it crime has largely increased, and that the lawbreakers which the kindly policemen "treated" were apt to give trouble later on to the constables. This is, of course, a bad showing, but it does not necessarily invalidate the Golden Rule idea. The county prosecutor, Mr. Kline, who is opposed to Chief Wheeler's theories, says: "It puts in the hands of policemen executive and judiciary powers which, by reason of their lack of education, they are entirely unable to appreciate or carry out."

Here, no doubt, lies the practical weakness of Cleveland's policy. The reaction against harsh and wholly machine-like treatment of petty criminals, and the growing tendency to temper "justice" of the old sort with kindness, sympathy and real reformation efforts, are founded on principles that are wholly wise and sound. But these principles must be discreetly exercised, or they will do more harm than good. Successful application of the Golden Rule theory requires a higher measure of judgment and wisdom than the average policeman is likely to have.

**KIDNAPING AND THE DESIRE TO PREVENT IT.**

The kidnapping of the little Pennsylvania boy the other day has raised two interesting questions. One is as to whether the father did his duty by society in giving over ransom money to the abductors. Put so, the question is hardly a question at all, because it is certain that he did not. The expectation that parental love will override all other considerations is what invites kidnapping and makes it a paying proposition. If it were known that no parent would give money for the return of a stolen child the hope of profits would at once be wiped out, and the profession would immediately languish.

But we are moving here on a very high plane of social ethics indeed. A frantic and agonized parent, seeing a chance to recover the lost apple of his eye, is not likely to care much about his abstract duty to the State. It is true that Charlie Ross's father resolutely refused to give a ransom to the kidnappers, and it is probable that his firmness saved many other parents from similar terrible experiences. But Charlie Ross's father never got his boy back, and to grief-stricken Mr. Whittier there doubtless appeared a moral in this fact, too. When a man's money is matched against his child, right or wrong, he is pretty sure to give the money and

keep the child, leaving the prevention of kidnapping to be grappled with by others. Only a very Spartan censor will rebuke him for losing sight of society in the passionate desire to clasp his own flesh and blood again.

If parents will not discourage kidnapping by stoic self-abnegation, how is the State to discourage it? The question is up again, and it is generally answered by proposing to attach the death penalty to the crime. A bill to that effect has been introduced in the Pennsylvania Legislature within the last three days. Kidnaping is already a capital offense in Virginia and various other States, and the excitement over this newest case will doubtless result in more laws of the same kind. This severity of punishment is due partly to a desire to exterminate a peculiarly contemptible crime and partly to public execration of the man who commits it. The harpy who preys upon fatherly and motherly love for a price is viewed as a creature so perverted and abandoned that his elimination from society is demanded by the common welfare. He is viewed as "wholly devoid of public duty and fatally bent on mischief," which was the old common law standard of unfitness to live. Kill him, and you both destroy a dangerous life and hold up a terrible warning to possible imitators.

Putting a just penalty to crime is one of the most difficult things in the world. In the just punishment of guilt, in the prevention of future offenses, in the degree of damage done to the body social, so many elements enter that proper retribution in any given question is a question of great complexity. The mere degree of depravity or perversion of feeling indicated in an act is not conclusive, as many acts showing these radical defects in a high degree are not punishable at all. A man who kicked his old mother downstairs is a villain of a rare sort, but the law would virtually ignore him unless his mother should press a charge against him. At the same time public sentiment would hardly think better of such a fellow than of a kidnapper.

Detestable as these creatures are, it is doubtful if the law should hold the death penalty over them in an age when public opinion is steadily turning away from this penalty. In the first place, to do this is certainly to encourage child murder. A kidnapper who felt the law closing round him, and knew that he was to die if caught, could not help being struck with the fact that the possession of the child was the most damaging evidence against him. The penalty being the same in any case, he would have the strongest reason for destroying this evidence. Another argument is the difficulty of persuading a jury to convict anybody to suffer such a penalty. In the Whittier case everything ended happily. The entire wrong done to society is measured by a few days' suffering to those immediately concerned and the theft of \$210. That was the whole net effect of this crime. Six months from now, let us say, when the case comes to a settlement, no jury in the country would say that the criminals had done a wrong which only their deaths could atone for. Most kidnappings cases turn out in much this same way, and a law prescribing the death penalty in them all would be more than naively to lapse into a dead letter.

The Coopers are planning to take a trip to Europe, a matter in which they have the distinct advantage over the late Carmack.

We are glad to note from a perusal of our exchanges that Gentle Annie Spring is now arriving in various cities further North. Gentle Annie Spring on some weeks ago, and has been springing right along ever since.

The seemingly growing fondness of the House for five and ten hour speech-makers makes the vacant place of John Wesley Gaines more glaring than ever.

Imagine him seasick, and no Loeb to blame it on!

Some idea of the nature of the new tariff bill may be gleaned from the fact that it took Mr. Payne nine hours to defend it.

The effect of the tariff upon patriotism, public spirit and all-round largeness of disinterestedness is even more noticeable than its effect on trade.

General Bingham says that a New York police commissioner could graft over a million a year. There are high prospects in New York that would make Serrano Payne look like a minor league substitute.

Now we are reminded that Mr. Taft favors an income tax. Sooner or later we shall ask to be introduced to a sort of tax which Mr. Taft does not favor.

However, Mr. Hopkins, of Illinois, is herewith reminded that there will doubtless be Senates as long as the old country lasts.

The muckrakers appear to have lost their job. In about a year they'll bob up again, writing articles on the perils of "alienating capital."

The seamy side of finding the South Pole is that there isn't a thing in the world to do with it.

Well, if March should go out like a lion, it wouldn't have anything on Mr. Roosevelt.

They caught Mr. Boyle kidnapping.

**Borrowed Jingles.**

**TECHNIQUE.**

I take a little bunch of words and set 'em in a row.  
I take a little bunch of ink and mark 'em down just so.  
I take a little time and pains and then I have a verse.  
That starts about this one does or maybe slightly worse.  
And then I go back to the start and criss and cross and scratch.  
I vacillate my words until I find me some that match.  
The pretty thoughts that dart about like silver fish and shine.  
I get a patient, watchful look to get 'em on the line.

My thoughts melt into words sometimes—not always—now and then.  
And I can feel 'em count down my arm and through my pen.  
I only have to push it over the paper and 'em down just so.  
For you and all my other chums the things my fancy tells.  
Just like a boy with building blocks, I move 'em in and out.  
When I have something in my mind and try to work it out.  
I tell you, when I get 'em in a row just as I think they ought to be and write 'em down just so.

And so just with some words I paint the pictures that I think.  
The boys and girls who live in it and set 'em in a row.  
And sometimes there's a tear in it, and sometimes there's a smile.  
And the words are like a vine-grown stile.  
And many a lane that you would know if you could be with me.  
To look right where my pen is now and I could help you see.  
I merely take a lot of words and place 'em in a row.  
And build such pretty things if I can get 'em down just so!  
—J. W. Foley, in New York Times.

**MERELY JOKING.**

"Dad, I was simply great in relay events," boasted the boy from college.  
"Well, you were in it," said his mother.  
"Yes, but you were not," said the boy.  
"You were not," said his mother.  
"You were not," said the boy.  
"You were not," said his mother.

Teacher: "Now, Harry, can you tell me what an island is?"  
Student: "Yes, ma'am. An island is a place where you can't leave without a boat."  
—Chicago News.

Sweet Charity.  
"Are you still helping the poor family?"  
"I'm trying to help them. I gave the mother some money the other day so that she could get independent of her drunken husband."  
"Well,"  
"She had her husband arrested for beating her, and then paid his fine with the money I gave her,"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Nero, the Monster.  
Professor: "What was Nero's great crime?"  
Bright Pupil: "He played the fiddle."  
—Chicago News.

Mail-Appropos.  
"So the toastmaster at the banquet last night made a bad break. What was it?"  
"He called on a gentleman who had lost his dog and asked him to respond to the toast 'Our Absent Members.'"  
—Boston Transcript.

How It Really Happened.  
Horatius was holding the bridge.  
"Just followed by wife's tactics," he explained.  
"She can hold back an army of men, but she can't hold back her husband's pennies for her fare."  
Herewith Macaulay wrote up the feat.  
—New York Sun.

**THE OBSERVANT PARAGRAPHERS.**

MEXICAN travelers say they have found a cactus that jumps at persons. And through his grandmother the vegetable bickers!—New York American.

The author of "Ta, Ra, Ra Boom de Ay" is dead, and the same may be said of T. R. R. R. boom, too!—Houston Post.

If the tea tax goes through the familiar phrase will have to be changed to the cup that cheers but irritates.—New York World.

"Peace is assured in the Balkans," says a European cable. Well, well! And even the Balkans are now Democratic party to it.—Washington Herald.

A bankers' paper states that the first pretzel was made in America in 1810. Some of them are still on the lunch counter.—Omaha Bee.

It appears that the brutal framers of the Payne tariff bill paid no attention whatever to all that peanut argument; didn't even raise the price of peanuts a pound.—New York Landmark.

**PERSONAL AND GENERAL.**

A movement to raise a fund for the purchase of a bronze statue of the late Richard Mansfield, to be placed in the foyer of the new theatre, at New York, is under way.

Abel LeFranc, professor of modern French literature at the College de France, who has been lecturer at Harvard University for 1905, on the literature of the French Renaissance.

Russia has bought an aeroplane which will fly at 100 miles an hour. It is one of the founders of the Aeroplane Club, Captain Windham, a king's messenger, with whom John Wesley Gaines came to see.

Queen Wilhelmina, who has recently become a convert to perfumes, prefers the soft, uncertain, French odors; and she uses a lot of French soap, which she scents with a different odor.

**SOUTHERN HIGH SCHOOLS.**

**Striking Figures of Great Educational Movement in South.**

Dr. Elmer Ellsworth Brown, United States Commissioner of Education, in his annual report for 1908 says that the high schools in the South increased from 1,051 in 1904 to 1,375 in 1907, a gain of 324. Here is the record:

State.	1907.	1904.
Texas	367	300
Georgia	158	126
Virginia	139	124
Mississippi	120	79
Alabama	102	76
South Carolina	95	82
Arkansas	88	58
North Carolina	71	29
Louisiana	62	45
Totals	1,375	1,051
Increase in three years	324	
The amounts raised by local taxation for the support of the public schools in each State in these years were:		
State.	1907.	1904.
Texas	\$1,865,810	\$1,441,950
Georgia	1,780,933	1,088,542
Virginia	1,724,429	1,828,002
Mississippi	1,240,848	1,240,848
Alabama	1,070,597	890,372
South Carolina	999,547	726,062
Arkansas	761,720	593,257
North Carolina	1,941,675	987,922
Florida	447,000	115,155
South Carolina	326,073	200,585
Mississippi	238,818	296,968
Totals	\$11,636,948	\$8,732,325
Increase in three years	\$2,904,623	
The State appropriations, income from funds and of school lands in the same years were:		
State.	1907.	1904.
Texas	\$4,896,721	\$3,244,143
Georgia	1,941,411	1,000,000
Virginia	1,886,840	1,254,814
Mississippi	1,459,288	1,000,000
Alabama	1,250,000	1,457,176
South Carolina	1,041,675	987,922
Arkansas	1,030,524	407,844
Louisiana	888,223	779,754
Florida	779,438	543,337
Arkansas	731,311	543,337
Florida	238,759	199,613
Totals	\$15,243,955	\$11,745,610
Increase in three years	\$3,498,245	
Dr. Brown says: "This Southern school campaign is one of the most important movements of our time, and it is making a chapter of surpassing interest in the history of American civilization."—New York Sun.		

**The Courts of Europe**

By La Marquise de Fontenoy.

PRINCESS CAMPOREALE, who arrived in this country by the steamer Barbarossa last week, is the American sister-in-law of the Countess of the German Empire and of Princess Buelow. Born as the daughter of John Binney, of Boston, and divorced from Thomas Kinship, of New York, she was married at Burlington, N. J. in 1888, to Paolo, Prince Camporeale, Duke of Adragna, who was at the time attached to the Italian legation in London. She is now a member of the Italian Senate at Rome where he has always figured as the expert upon American affairs. She took the leading part in securing from the government its participation in the World's Fair of Chicago and St. Louis. She is the daughter of the late Prince Buelow, and his mother, Dona Laura, is a daughter of the historic Anglo-Italian house of Acton.

Princess Camporeale, the late Lord Granville, married the late Prince Camporeale, and on his death became the wife of Prince Camporeale, who was Prime Minister of Italy. As Dona Laura Minghetti she has for the last forty years been one of the best known women of Europe, her salons at Rome employing an altogether international reputation. She is an intimate friend of Queen Margherite, and as the widow of a knight of the Order of the Annunziata, ranks as a cousin of the sovereign. As only natural in a woman who commenced life as Miss Acton, she speaks English perfectly.

The Actons, who are one of the oldest Shropshire families, figured prominently in the reign of Edward III. received a baronetcy from Charles I. and have always had foreign affiliations. John Acton was admiral-in-chief of the English fleet of Germany in the seventeenth century, and his nephew, Joseph Acton, was a general in the service of the King of Naples. He became the first minister of the General Joseph Acton just mentioned had a son of the name of Charles, who became an admiral of the Neapolitan navy, and who left an extraordinarily numerous family. No less than four of his sons, namely, William, Ferdinand, Emerich and Gustav, attained high rank as admirals in the Austrian, Prussian or Italian navies, and two of them served in turn as Italian Ministers of Marine. It is their only sister who is now Countess of Minghetti.

Sir John Acton, the Neapolitan Prime Minister who played so important a role in connection with Admiral Lord Collingwood, the editor of the "Pittsburgh Courier" and the English ambassador, Emma, Lady Hamilton, was succeeded in his baronetcy by his eldest son, Lord Acton, who died five years later, his widow thereupon marrying the late Lord Granville, who in 1829 was created Earl of Lyndoch, and afterwards Viscount of Eglar. The present Lord Acton, his son, is secretary of embassy and lord in waiting to the King. He is like his father, a member of the Catholic religion, and his education at Magdalen College, Oxford, is married to the daughter of Thomas Acton, of Appleton Hall, Cheshire, and owns Aldenham Park and estates, extending over an area of about 16,000 acres in Shropshire. Through his grandmother, the wife of Sir Ferdinand Acton, he is the chief representative of the ducal house of Dalberg.

The latter claim to be the most ancient and illustrious family in Germany, and to be able to trace their descent to the emperor Charlemagne. The name of Dalberg was introduced into Germany in 1809 and 1870 by his hostility to the doctrine of papal infallibility. Sir John Acton, who was elevated to the peerage as Lord Acton, married the German Countess Marie Arco-Valley, was a lord in waiting to Queen Victoria and a great favorite of the emperor Frederick III. The present Lord Acton, his son, is secretary of embassy and lord in waiting to the King. He is like his father, a member of the Catholic religion, and his education at Magdalen College, Oxford, is married to the daughter of Thomas Acton, of Appleton Hall, Cheshire, and owns Aldenham Park and estates, extending over an area of about 16,000 acres in Shropshire. Through his grandmother, the wife of Sir Ferdinand Acton, he is the chief representative of the ducal house of Dalberg.

The recent trial in New York for felony of a prisoner who was both deaf and dumb serves to recall the somewhat strange incident which occurred in the British tribunals. When a deaf and dumb prisoner is charged with any crime, the jury is designated to determine whether the defendant is "mute of malice," or by "the visitation of God," and if the latter is the case the question before the court is as to whether he is capable of understanding the proceedings of a trial. For those of whose expression the deaf and dumb language are always employed. If these experts are of the opinion that the accused, by reason of his physical inability, is not capable of understanding the proceedings, the jury is to return a verdict of "not sane." The judge thereupon, by virtue of a statute dating from the year 1800, orders him to be detained in custody "during His Majesty's pleasure," and he is consigned to the great and world-famous prison for the criminally insane at Broadmoor. In January last a deaf and dumb offender was sent on trial, and though the jury, on the strength of the testimony of the experts, decided that he was incapable of understanding the proceedings of the trial, they neglected through an oversight of the court to return a verdict, and return an additional verdict of "not sane." This neglect has just been repaired by the Court of Criminal Appeal in London.

So many American visitors to Egypt push on nowadays to Khartoum and are puzzled to find that the Governor-General of the Sudan, Sir Reginald Wingate, that it might be just as well to state that there is no truth in the rumor which has been circulating to the effect that he is returning to England for good and all. Sir Reginald, who is a lieutenant-general of the English army, and a knight of the Order of the Khedive, is for his rank and position a quite young man, being barely forty-seven. He has therefore a number of years to serve before attaining the limit of age. He is in perfect health and condition and has lately been promoted to the position of Governor-General of the Sudan, and has brought out an additional number of his belongings from his place in Scotland. He is a member of the Nile which he certainly would not have done had there been any prospect of his relinquishing his position in the near future. Not in any manner anxious that he should go. Possessed of an infinite amount of fact and of suavity mingled with a great deal of tact, he is a favorite of the Khedive and liked and trusted by all the leading native notables and dignitaries, while the English possessess recognize him in him a man of fine

**The Merchants National Bank**  
OF RICHMOND, VA.

If all of our savings depositors were lined up together you would see the most prosperous and contented-looking crowd of wage-earners in the city of Richmond. There is something about the consciousness of having something laid by for the rainy day which imparts itself to the countenance and gives expression in the manner. It is the spendthrift who is the pessimist. You see the bright side of life through the window of our receiving teller. BEGIN NOW!

**3% INTEREST ALLOWED ON SAVINGS DEPOSITS—COMPOUNDED.**  
**"SAFEST FOR SAVINGS"**

an unrivaled experience, not only of Egypt, where he has served for more than twenty years, but also of the Sudan, which under his able administration is rapidly recovering its former prosperity. (Copyright, 1909, by the Brentwood Company.)

**STATE PRESS**

**Road Improvement.**  
Yet, when it is proposed to improve a road, make it a real highway, or the proposition comes up to issue bonds and permanently improve all the roads, and thereby double the farm values along them, the cry at once arises that there will be increased taxation. This impression is erroneous. There will not be any increase in the tax rate, but the property holders will be wealthier by the increase of their farm values and instead of paying taxes on \$5,000, say they will be making on the same land, increased to twice that value by good roads.—Staunton Leader.

**Genuine Democracy.**  
One of these things which the tillers of the soil want is that prohibitive duties on natural products should be put to rest at the mercy of the domestic market bare of competition. There is no agriculturalist in the land who would not make more money by a radical and horizontal reduction of the duties on the goods he has to buy than by the extension of nominal protection to his special staple. And it goes without saying that the new tariff, which is the making of a reduction to absurdity, for if the prices of everything are to be artificially lifted in equal proportion, the market is not a market. It is a matter in which principle and policy coincide. There is no righter right than to protect the whole people for the enrichment of a class or classes. The greatest good of the greatest number is the only sane objective of a genuine democracy. There will be no Democratic party worthy of the name until the organization of the tariff is made to be a question of the whole people. "Equal rights for all; special privileges to none."—Norfolk Virginian-Pilot.

**Prohibition to the Front.**  
The Anti-Sal League made an effort to postpone the State-wide contest, but the other side, drawn to the candle like the candlefly, cannot let the subject alone, but insist on the matter, and it would not be a miracle if the question does not enter fully into the gubernatorial and legislative campaign.

If the contest is to come now, we hope it will come in the form of submitting the question to a vote of the people, and not in the form of a referendum, for no other purpose, and not come in the form of a proposition to have the Legislature enact prohibition. It is too important a question to be decided in any way except in strict accordance with the popular will.—Staunton Dispatch.

**Fertile Virginia and the Arid West.**  
Editor of The Times-Dispatch:  
Sir:—I have read with a great deal of pleasure your editorial in to-day's issue of The Times-Dispatch, "Back to Old Virginia," and also Mr. Woodson's article in Sunday's issue. It does seem to me a great pity that the facts therein stated cannot be driven into the minds, not only of our own people, but also into the minds of those who are citizens of this country who are known as homeseekers.

It seems to me that the only method of making our vast resources and the unexcelled opportunities offered to farmers is by attractive advertisement. I have been all over the West, from the Columbia to the Rio Grande, and I have lived in this State, not only in the Great Valley, but also in the eastern and western portions. I have seen the State and I unhesitatingly affirm that in natural advantages in agricultural opportunities, our State far surpasses the other States of the Union. The State's boomers need is a few acres of irrigated land, a few trees and this small oasis may, and probably does, represent acres of land that is ready and waiting to be developed. By means of attractively illustrated booklets and floods of eloquence, these few acres will be disseminated by farmers from Maine to the Missouri.

Last year I was in the widely advertised Pan-Handle of Texas, and saw thousands of homeseekers, who were seekers poured forth in its vast plains—these people were buying and settling there, and I thought could they have the reality of the American West, they would be great prosperity they would create, for themselves and for the Commonwealth. But while we sit idle, with millions of acres of land that is ready and waiting to be developed, we are stretching away to "blossom as the rose," uncultivated, untill, these Western land-boomers are carrying the war into Africa, and successfully persuading some of our home folks to seek the unknown.

"Omne ignotum pro magnifico" is as true now as it was 1,900 years ago. I only wish that some of those who believe the "Arabian Nights" tales of the boundless West could see its vast, inhospitable deserts, stretching away forever to the horizon, could see the squalid shanties of the ranchmen, the despair of some deluded homeseeker, who has come to the West, and is looking for gold at the end of the rainbow. How they would long for the fertile fields, the great forests, the sparkling streams of old Virginia.

The interest of Virginia seems always to be the first and foremost thought of The Times-Dispatch, and the best reason for this is that we can never do for the Commonwealth is to aid in keeping her farmers here, and to aid in bringing into the State those who can and will develop her agricultural resources.

If a man tells you something once you will not believe him, but if he tells it to you a thousand times, if you are human you probably will. That is what the Western land-boomers do—tell it to you a thousand times, and finally many believe. H. B. C. Staunton, March 22.

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